storing the document image information in the image information storing device in a prescribed folder in accordance with the format image information.

<div style="text-align: center;">REMARKS</div>

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the following comments and as presently amended, is respectfully requested.

The specification is amended by the present response to correct for a minor informality that is not believed to raise any issues of new matter.

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. Claims 1-3, 8-10, and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. patent 5,490,217 to Wang et al. (herein "Wang"). Claims 4-7, 11-14, and 18-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wang.

Addressing the above-noted rejections, each of the pending claims is believed to clearly distinguish over the teachings in Wang.

It is initially noted that each of independent Claims 1, 8, and 15 is amended by the present response to clarify subject matter therein. Specifically, those claims now clarify that the document image information is "sheet" information, and that the format image information is "of a sheet separate from the sheet document image information". Those claims also clarify detecting whether the "sheet of the format image information" is included in input image information. The claimed subject matter is fully supported by the original specification, for example with respect to the embodiment shown in Figure 3 as a non-limiting example.

Further, Claim 1 is amended to provide further clarifications to recite an "image information storing server". Each of Claims 1, 8 and 15 also clarifies storing "image

<div style="text-align: center;">-5-</div>

information in various folders to be read by the plurality of users", and then further storing the document image information "in a prescribed folder in accordance with the format image information". Those amendments clarify that the devices disclosed in the claims are directed to image information storing technology utilized at a center, for example where an image information server is located, and not utilized at each of different user sites. The amended claims are also directed to an image information storing technology in which a folder for separately storage the image information is designated while image information is scanned and stored.

As is discussed in the present specification, in one operation of the claimed invention a sheet document that is input can be preceded by a sheet document of format image information. In the specific non-limiting embodiment shown for example in Figure 3, the format image sheet P can be placed on top of a sheet document, and when that format image sheet P is detected, that controls the storage of the subsequent sheet document image information. Such an operation as clarified in the claims is neither taught nor suggested by the applied art.

Wang discloses a more complicated operation than that in the claimed invention as Wang discloses an operation in which a sheet document itself must have specific identifying image data printed thereon initially. For example as shown in Figures 7-10 of Wang, Wang discloses that documents can be initially processed to include a machine readable image code 16, which can thereby be read to control processing of the document. However, that operation in Wang requires every document to be initially processed to include the image code 16.

In contrast to the operation in Wang, in the claimed invention the documents themselves need not be specially initially processed. Instead, in the claimed invention a
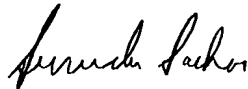
separate sheet contains format information, and that separate sheet can be simply placed prior to any desired document. When that format sheet is detected the subsequent sheet image document information is appropriately processed. Wang does not teach or suggest such an operation.

In such ways, the claimed invention clearly distinguishes over the teachings in Wang.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, line 21, through page 2, line 6, with the following paragraph:

Further, when the first information dealing apparatus 21 requests image information from the third image information dealing apparatus 23, and if the image information requested by the first information dealing apparatus 21 as an information transfer destination has been input to be stored in the third image information dealing apparatus 23, the requested image information is transferred from the third image information dealing apparatus 23 to the first information dealing apparatus 21. Further, if the requested image information has not been input to be stored in the third image information dealing apparatus 23, the information can be transferred to the first information dealing apparatus [23] 21 after such input has been made therein.

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A network system including a plurality of users connected through a plurality of client terminal devices connected to a network, comprising:

an image information storing [device] server connected to the network, and configured to store image information [for] in various folders to be read by the plurality of users;

an image information inputting device connected to the image information storing [device] <u>server not by the users</u>, and configured to input image information including both <u>sheet</u> document image information to be stored in the image information storing device and format image information <u>of a sheet separate from the sheet document image formation</u>;

an image information determining device configured to determine if the image information input by the image information inputting device includes the <u>sheet of the</u> format image information; and

wherein the image information storing [device] <u>server</u> is further configured to store the document image information in [the image information storing device based on] <u>a</u> <u>prescribed folder in accordance with</u> the format image information.

3. (Amended) A network system as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said image information storing [device] <u>server</u> is further configured to store image information having a plurality of pages of original documents as one image file.

4. (Amended) A network system as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

said image information determining device is further configured to determine if the format image information input by the image information inputting device is related to document start information and document end information; and

said image information storing [device] <u>server</u> is further configured to store image information read from original documents during a time period between inputting operations for the document start information and the document end information as one image file.

5. (Amended) A network system an claimed in claim 3, wherein:

said image information determining device is further configured to determine if the format image information input by the image information inputting device is related to document start information and document end information; and

said image information storing [device] <u>server</u> is further configured to store image information read from original documents during a time period between inputting operations for the document start information and the document end information as one image file.

6. (Amended) A network system as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

said image information determining device is further configured to determine if the format image information input by the image information inputting device includes document end information; and

said image information storing [device] <u>server</u> is further configured to store image information read from original documents during a time period between inputting operations for the image information and the document end information as one image file.

7. (Amended) A network system as claimed in claim 3, wherein:

said image information determining device is further configured to determine if the format image information input by the image information inputting device includes document end information; and

said image information storing [device] <u>server</u> is further configured to store image information read from original documents during a time period between inputting operations for the image information and the document end information as one image file.

8. (Amended) A network system including a plurality of users connected through a plurality of client terminal devices connected to a network, comprising:

storing means for storing image information [for] <u>in various folders to be read by</u> the plurality of users;

inputting means for inputting image information including both of <u>sheet</u> document image information to be stored in the image information storing device and format image information <u>of a sheet separate from the sheet document image information</u>;

-10-

determining means for determining if the input information input to the inputting means includes the <u>sheet of the</u> format image information; and

wherein the storing means further stores the document image information [based on] <u>in a prescribed folder in accordance with</u> the format image information.

15. (Amended) A method for controlling a network system including a plurality of users connected through a plurality of client terminal devices connected to a network, comprising the steps of:

storing image information [for] <u>in various folders to be read by</u> the plurality of users;

inputting image information including both <u>sheet</u> document image information to be stored and format image information <u>of a sheet separate from the sheet document image information</u>;

determining if the input image information includes the <u>sheet of the</u> format image information; and

storing the document image information in the image information storing device [based on] <u>in a prescribed folder in accordance with</u> the format image information.